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**J U L I A N,**

**A TRAGEDY**

***IN FIVE ACTS.***

**MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.**

**SECOND EDITION.**

**LONDON:**

**G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER,**

**AVE-MARIA LANE.**

**1823.**

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY  
FROM  
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TO

**WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY, Esq.**

WITH HIGH ESTEEM FOR THOSE  
ENDOWMENTS WHICH HAVE CAST NEW LUSTRE ON HIS ART ;

WITH WARM ADMIRATION FOR THOSE POWERS  
WHICH HAVE INSPIRED,  
AND THAT TASTE WHICH HAS FOSTERED, THE TRAGIC DRAMATISTS  
OF HIS AGE ;

WITH HEARTFELT GRATITUDE FOR THE ZEAL WITH WHICH HE  
BEFRIENDED

THE PRODUCTION OF A STRANGER,  
FOR THE JUDICIOUS ALTERATIONS WHICH HE SUGGESTED,

AND FOR  
THE ENERGY THE PATHOS AND THE SKILL

WITH WHICH  
HE MORE THAN EMBODIED ITS PRINCIPAL CHARACTER ;

***This Tragedy***

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

**THE AUTHOR.**



## ADVERTISEMENT.



THE Story and Characters of the following Tragedy, are altogether fictitious. Annabel's cautions to silence in the first Scene, and the short dialogue between her and Julian, after he awakens, will be recognised by the classical reader as borrowed from the fine opening of the Orestes of Euripides; the incident of uncovering the body in the last Act, is also taken from the Electra of Sophocles. Of any other intentional imitation, the Author is unconscious.

She has now the pleasant task of conveying her acknowledgments to the whole of the Performers, for the zealous co-operation which has so much contributed to the success of the Play. To the talents of Miss Foote, Miss Lacy, Mr. Abbott, and Mr. Bennett, she is more especially indebted—and to Mr. Macready beyond all.

That it has been honoured by the particular approbation of such a judge, and has given occasion to one of the most splendid exertions of such an Actor, will ever be the proudest distinction of JULIAN.

## CHARACTERS.

---

ALFONSO, <i>King of Sicily, a boy, disguised as Theodore</i>	- - -	}	MISS FOOTE.
The DUKE of MELFI, <i>Uncle to Alfonso and Regent of the Kingdom</i>	-	}	MR. BENNETT.
JULIAN, <i>Melfi's Son</i>	- - -		MR. MACREADY.
COUNT D'ALBA, <i>a powerful Nobleman</i>			MR. ABBOTT.
VALORE	}	<i>Sicilian Nobles</i>	MR. BAKER.
LEANTI			MR. EGERTON.
CALVI			MR. CHAPMAN.
PAOLO, <i>Julian's Servant</i>	- -		MR. LEY.
BERTONE, <i>Servant to Count D'Alba</i>			MR. COMER.
RENEI, <i>an old Huntsman</i>	- -		MR. MEARS.
An ARCHBISHOP.			

*Nobles, Prelates, Officers, Guards, Murderers, &c.*

ANNABEL, <i>Julian's Wife</i>	- -	MISS LACY.
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*The Scene is in and near Messina; the time of action two days.*





## PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

---

SPOKEN BY MR. CONNOR.

---

THEY who in Prologues for your favours ask,  
Find every season more perplex their task ;  
Though doubts and hopes, and tremblings do not fail,  
The points fall flatly and the rhymes grow stale ;  
Why should the Author hint their fitting parts,  
In all the pomp of Verse, to " British hearts ?"  
Why to such minds as yours with ardour pray,  
For more than justice to a first essay ?  
What need to shew how absolute your power ?  
What stake awaits the issue of the hour—  
How hangs the scale 'twixt agony and joy,  
What bliss you nourish, or what hopes destroy ?—  
All these you feel ;—and yet we scarce can bring  
A Prologue to " the posey of a ring."  
To what *may* we allude ?—Our plot untold  
Is no great chapter from the times of old ;  
On no august association rests,  
But seeks its earliest home in kindly breasts,—

Its scene, as inauspicious to our strain,  
Is neither mournful Greece, nor kindling Spain,  
But Sicily—where no defiance hurl'd  
At freedom's foes may awe the attending world.  
But since old forms forbid us to submit  
A Play without a Prologue to the Pit ;  
Lest this be missed by some true friend of plays,  
Like the dull colleague of his earlier days ;  
Thus let me own how fearlessly we trust  
That you will yet be mercifully just.

# JULIAN.

## ACT I.

### SCENE.

*An Apartment in the Royal Palace. Julian sleeping  
on a Couch. Annabel.*

*Annabel.* No ; still he sleeps ! 'Twas but the  
myrtle bud  
Tapping against the casement, as the wind  
Stirred in the leafy branches. Well he loved  
That pleasant bird-like sound, which, as a voice,  
Summon'd us forth into the fresher air  
Of eve or early morn. Ah ! when again——  
And yet this sleep is hopeful. For seven nights  
He had not tasted slumber. Who comes here ?

*Enter Alfonso as Theodore.*

The gentle page ! Alas, to wake him now !  
Hush, Theodore ! Tread softly—softlier, boy !

*Alf.* Doth he still sleep ?

*Ann.* Speak lower.

*Alf.* Doth he sleep ?

*Ann.* Avoid the couch ; come this way ; close  
to me.

He sleeps. He hath not moved in all the hours  
That thou hast been away.

*Alf.* Then we may hope ;  
Dear lady, we may hope.

*Ann.* Alas ! Alas !  
See how he lies, scarce breathing. Whilst I hung  
Over his couch I should have thought him dead,  
But for his short and frequent sighs.

*Alf.* Ah me !  
Not even in slumber can he lose the sense  
Of that deep misery ; and I——he wakes !  
Dost thou not see the quivering mantle heave  
With sudden motion ?

*Ann.* Thou hast wakened him.  
Thy clamorous grief hath roused him. Hence !  
Begone !

Leave me !

*Alf.* And yet his eyes are closed. He sleeps.  
He did but move his hand.

*Ann.* How changed he is !  
How pale ! How wasted ! Can one little week  
Of pain and sickness so have faded thee,  
My princely Julian ! But eight days ago  
There lived not in this gladsome Sicily  
So glad a spirit. Voice and step and eye  
All were one happiness ; till that dread hour,  
When drest in sparkling smiles, radiant and glow-  
ing  
With tender thoughts, he flew to meet the King

And his great father. He went forth alone ;  
Frenzy and grief came back with him.

*Alf.* And I,  
Another grief.

*Ann.* Thou wast a comforter.  
All stranger as thou art, hast thou not shared  
My watch as carefully, as faithfully  
As I had been thy sister ! Aye, and he  
If ever in this wild mysterious woe  
One sight or sound hath cheered him, it hath  
been

A glance, a word of thine.

*Alf.* He knows me not.

*Ann.* He knows not me.

*Alf.* I never heard before  
That 'twas to meet the King yon fatal night—  
Knowingly, purposely—How could he guess  
That they should meet ? What moved him to  
that thought ?

*Ann.* Stranger although thou be, thou canst  
but know

Prince Julian's Father is the Regent here,  
And rules for his young kinsman King Alfonso !

*Alf.* Aye—Poor Alfonso !

*Ann.* Wherefore pity him ?

*Alf.* I know not—but I am an orphan too !  
I interrupt thee, lady.

*Ann.* Yet in truth  
A gentle pity lingers round the name  
Of King Alfonso, orphaned as thou sayst,  
And drooping into sickness when he lost

His father, ever since the mournful boy  
Hath dwelt in the Villa d'Oro.

*Alf.* Hast thou seen him?

*Ann.* The King? No. I'm of Naples. When  
Prince Julian

First brought me here a bride, his royal cousin  
Was fixed beside his father's dying bed.  
I never saw him: yet I know him well;  
For I have sate and listen'd, hour by hour,  
To hear my husband talk of the fair Prince,  
And his excelling virtues.

*Alf.* Did he?—Ah!—

But 'twas his wont, talking of those he loved,  
To gild them with the rich and burnish'd glow  
Of his own brightness, as the evening sun  
Decks all the clouds in glory.

*Ann.* Very dear

Was that young boy to Julian. 'Twas a friend-  
ship,

Fonder than common, blended with a kind  
Protecting tenderness, such as a brother  
Might fitly shew unto the younger born.

*Alf.* Oh, he hath proved it!

*Ann.* Thou dost know them both?

*Alf.* I do. Say on, dear lady.

*Ann.* Three weeks since

The Duke of Melfi went to bring his ward  
Here to Messina——

*Alf.* To be crowned. They came not.

But wherefore went Prince Julian forth to meet  
them?

*Ann.* Father nor cousin came; nor messenger,  
From Regent or from King; and Julian chafed  
And fretted at delay. At length a peasant,  
No liveried groom; a slow foot-pacing serf,  
Brought tidings that the royal two that morn  
Left Villa d'Oro. Glowing from the chase  
Prince Julian stood; his bridle in his hand,  
New lighted, soothing now his prancing steed,  
And prattling now to me;—for I was still  
So foolish fond to fly into the porch  
To meet him, when I heard the quick sharp tread  
Of that bright Arab, whose proud step I knew  
Even as his master's voice. He heard the tale  
And instant sprang again into his seat,  
Wheeled round, and darted off at such a pace  
As the fleet greyhound, at her speed, could scarce  
Have matched. He spake no word; but as he  
passed,  
Just glanced back at me with his dancing eyes,  
And such a smile of joy, and such a wave  
Of his plumed bonnet! His return thou know'st.  
*Alf.* I was his wretched partner.

*Ann.* He on foot,  
Thou on the o'er-travelled horse, slow, yet all  
stained  
With sweat, and panting as if fresh escaped  
From hot pursuit; and how he called for wine  
For his poor Theodore, his faithful page;  
Then sate him down and shook with the cold fit  
Of aguish fever, till the strong couch rocked  
Like a child's cradle. There he sate and sigh'd;  
And then the frenzy came. Theodore!



Alf.

Lady!

Ann. He utters nought but madness;—yet  
sometimes,

Athwart his ravings, I have thought—have feared—  
Theodore, thou must know the cause?

Alf.

Too well.

Ann. Oh tell me—

Alf.

Hush! He wakes.

[*Alfonso retires behind the couch,  
out of Julian's sight.*]

Ann.

Julian! Dear Julian!

Jul. Sure I have slept a long, long while!

Where am I?

How came I hither? Whose kind hand is this?  
My Annabel!

Ann.

Oh what a happiness

To see thee gently wake from gentle sleep!

Art thou not better? Shall I raise thee up?

Jul. Aye dearest. Have I then been ill? I'm  
weak.

I trouble thee, my sweet one.

Ann.

'Tis a joy

To minister unto thee.

Jul.

Wipe my brow.

And part these locks that the fresh air may cool  
My forehead; feel; it burns.

Ann.

Alas! how wild

This long neglect hath made thy glossy curls,  
How tangled!

Jul.

I am faint. Pray lay me down.

Surely the day is stifling.

*Ann.*                    There. Good boy,  
Throw wide the casement. Doth not the soft  
                 breeze  
Revive thee?

*Jul.*                Yes. I'm better. I will rise.  
Raise me again;—more upright;—So! Dear wife,  
A sick man is as wayward as a child;  
Forgive me. Have I been long ill?

*Ann.*                    A week.

*Jul.* I have no memory of aught. 'Tis just  
Like waking from a dream; a horrible  
Confusion of strange miseries; crime and blood  
And all I love—Great Heaven how clear it  
                 seems!

How like a truth! I thought that I rode forth  
On my white Barbary horse—Say did I ride  
Alone that day?

*Ann.*                    Yes.

*Jul.*                    Did I? Could I? No.  
Thou dost mistake. I did not. Yet 'tis strange  
How plain that horror lives within my brain  
As what hath been.

*Ann.*                    Forget it.

*Jul.*                    Annabel,  
I thought I was upon that gallant steed  
At his full pace. Like clouds before the wind  
We flew, as easily as the strong bird  
That soars nearest the sun; till in a pass  
Between the mountains, screams and cries of help  
Rang in mine ears, and I beheld—Oh God!  
It was not—Could not—No. I have been sick

Of a sharp fever, and delirium shews,  
And to the bodily sense makes palpable,  
Unreal forms, objects of sight and sound  
Which have no being save in the burning brain  
Of the poor sufferer. Why should it shake me!

*Ann.* Julian,  
Couldst thou walk to the window and quaff down  
The fragrant breeze, it would revive thee more  
Than food or sleep. Forget these evil dreams.  
Canst thou not walk?

*Jul.* I'll try.

*Ann.* Lean upon me  
And Theodore. Approach, dear boy, support  
him.

*Jul. (seeing Alfonso)* Ha! Art thou here? Thou!  
I am blinded, dazzled!

Is this a vision, this fair shape that seems  
A living child? Do I dream now?

*Ann.* He is  
Young Theodore. The page, who that sad night  
Returned—

*Jul.* Then all is real. Lay me down  
That I may die.

*Ann.* Nay, Julian, raise thy head.  
Speak to me, dearest Julian.

*Jul.* Pray for me  
That I may die.

*Alf.* Alas! I feared too surely  
That when he saw me—

*Ann.* Julian! This is grief,  
Not sickness. Julian!

*Alf.* Rouse him not, dear lady!  
See how his hands are clenched. Waken him not  
To frenzy. Oh that I alone could bear  
This weight of misery.

*Ann.* He knows the cause,  
And I—It is my right, my privilege  
To share thy woes, to soothe them. I'll weep  
with thee,  
And that will be a comfort. Didst thou think  
Thou could'st be dearer to me than before  
When thou wast well and happy? But thou art  
Now. Tell me this secret. I'll be faithful.  
I'll never breathe a word. Oh spare my heart  
This agony of doubt! What was the horror  
That maddened thee?

*Jul.* Within the rifted rocks  
Of high Albano, rotting in a glen  
Dark, dark at very noon, a father lies  
Murdered by his own son.

*Ann.* And thou didst see  
The deed? An awful sight to one so good!  
Yet—

*Jul.* Birds obscene, and wolf, and ravening fox,  
Ere this—only the dark hairs on the ground  
And the brown crusted blood! And she can ask  
Why I am mad!

*Ann.* Oh a thrice awful sight  
To one so duteous! Holy priests shall lave  
With blessed water that foul spot, and thou,  
Pious and pitying, thou shalt—

*Jul.* Hear at once,

Innocent Torturer, that drop by drop  
 Pour'st molten lead into my wounds—that glen—  
 Hang not upon me!—In that darksome glen  
 My father lies. I am a murderer,  
 A parricide, accurst of God and man.  
 Let go my hand! purest and whitest saint,  
 Let go!

*Ann.* This is a madness. Even now  
 The fever shakes him.

*Jul.* Why, the mad are happy!  
 Annabel, this is a soul-slaying truth.  
 There stands a witness.

*Alf.* Julian knew him not.  
 It was to save a life, a worthless life.  
 Oh that I had but died beneath the sword  
 That seemed so terrible! That I had ne'er  
 Been born to grieve thee Julian! Pardon me,  
 Dear lady, pardon me!

*Ann.* Oh, gentle boy,  
 How shall we soothe this grief?

*Alf.* Alas! alas!  
 Why did he rescue me! I'm a poor orphan;  
 None would have wept for me; I had no friend  
 In all the world save one. I had been reared  
 In simpleness; a quiet grave had been  
 A fitter home for me than the rude world;  
 A mossy heap, no stone, no epitaph,  
 Save the brief words of grief and praise (for Grief  
 Is still a Praiser) he perchance had spoke  
 When they first told him the poor boy was dead.  
 Shame on me that I shunned the sword!

*Jul.*

By Heaven,

It could not be a crime to save thee! kneel  
Before him Annabel. He is the king

*Ann.* Alfonso?

*Alf.* Aye, so please you, fairest Cousin,  
But still your servant. Do not hate me, Lady,  
Though I have caused this misery. We have  
shared

One care, one fear, one hope, have watched and  
wept

Together. Oh how often I have longed,  
As we sate silent by his restless couch,  
To fall upon thy neck and mix our tears,  
And talk of him. I am his own poor Cousin.  
Thou wilt not hate me?

*Ann.* Save that lost one, who  
Could hate such innocence?

*Jul.* 'Twas not in hate  
But wild ambition. No ignoble sin  
Dwelt in his breast. Ambition, mad ambition,  
That was his Idol. To that bloody god  
He offered up the milk-white sacrifice,  
The pure unspotted Victim. And even then,  
Even in the crime, without a breathing space  
For penitence or prayer, my sword—Alfonso  
Thou would'st have gone to Heaven.

*Ann.* Art thou certain  
That he is dead?

*Jul.* I saw him fall. The ground  
Was covered with his blood.

*Ann.* Tell me the tale.

Didst thou—I would not wantonly recall  
That scene of anguish—Didst thou search his  
wound?

*Jul.* Annabel, in my eyes that scene will dwell  
For ever, shutting out all lovely sights,  
Even thee, my Beautiful! That torturing thought  
Will burn a living fire within my breast  
Perpetually; words can nothing add,  
And nothing take away. Fear not my frenzy;  
I am calm now. Thou know'st how buoyantly  
I darted from thee, straight o'er vale and hill,  
Counting the miles by minutes. At the pass  
Between the Albano mountains, I first breathed  
A moment my hot steed, expecting still  
To see the royal escort. Afar off  
As I stood, shading with my hand my eyes,  
I thought I saw them; when at once I heard  
From the deep glen, east of the pass, loud cries  
Of mortal terror. Even in agony  
I knew the voice, and darting through the trees  
I saw Alfonso, prostrate on the ground,  
Clinging around the knees of one, who held  
A dagger over him in act to strike,  
Yet with averted head, as if he feared  
To see his innocent victim. His own face  
Was hidden; till at one spring I plunged my  
sword  
Into his side; then our eyes met, and he —  
That was the mortal blow! — screamed and  
stretched out  
His hands. Falling and dying as he was,

He half rose up, hung speechless in the air,  
And looked—Oh what had been the bitterest  
curse

To such a look! It smote me like a sword!  
Here, here. He died.

*Ann.* And thou?

*Jul.* I could have lain  
In that dark glen for ever; but there stood  
The dear-bought, and the dear, kinsman and  
prince  
And friend. We heard the far-off clang of steeds  
And armed men, and, fearing some new foe,  
Came homeward.

*Ann.* And did he, then, the unhappy,  
Remain upon the ground?

*Jul.* Alas! he did.

*Ann.* Oh, it was but a swoon! Listen, dear  
Julian,  
I tell thee I have comfort.

*Jul.* There is none  
Left in the world. But I will listen to thee  
My Faithfullest.

*Ann.* Count D'Alba sent to crave  
An audience. Thou wast sleeping. I refused  
To see him; but his messenger revealed  
To Constance his high tidings, which she poured  
In my unwilling ears, for I so feared  
To wake thee, that ere half her tale was told  
I chid her from me; yet she surely said  
The Duke thy father—

*Jul.* What?



*Ann.* Approached the city.

*Jul.* Alive? Alive? Oh no! no! no! Dead!  
Dead!

The corse, the clay-cold corse!

*Ann.* Alive I think;

But Constance—

*Alf.* He will sink under this shock  
Of hope.

*Ann.* Constance heard all.

*Jul.* Constance! What ho,  
Constance!

*Ann.* She hears thee not.

*Jul.* Go seek her! Fly!  
If he's alive—Why art thou not returned,  
When that one little word will save two souls!

[*Exit Annabel.*]

*Alf.* Take patience, dearest Cousin!

*Jul.* Do I not stand  
Here like a man of marble? Do I stir?  
She creeps; she creeps. Thou would'st have  
gone and back  
In half the time.

*Alf.* Nay, nay, 'tis scarce a minute.

*Jul.* Thou may'st count hours and ages on my  
heart.

Is she not coming?

*Alf.* Shall I seek her?

*Jul.* Hark!

They've met. There are two steps; two silken  
gowns

Rustling; one whispering voice. Annabel! Con-  
stance.

Is he—one word! Only one word!

*Enter Annabel.*

*Ann.*

He lives.

*[Julian sinks on his knees before the  
couch; Alfonso and Annabel go to  
him, and the scene falls.]*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

## ACT II.

## SCENE.

*A splendid Hall of Audience in the Royal Palace.*

*D'Alba and Bertone.*

*D'Alba.* Again refuse to see me !

*Bertone.* Nay, my lord,  
She's still beside her husband's couch, and Paolo  
Refused to bear the message.

*D'Alba.* Even her lacquey  
Reads my hot love and her contempt. No matter!  
How's Julian?

*Bert.* Mending fast.

*D'Alba.* He'll live! He'll live!  
She watches over him, making an air  
With her sweet breath ;—he'll be immortal! Yet  
If that dark tale be true—or half—Bertone,  
Haste to the Court of Guard ; seek Juan Castro,  
A Spanish soldier ; lead him home. I'll join ye.  
Hence! I expect the Barons, whom I summoned  
To meet me here. Come back. See if the Princess

Will now admit me. No ! 'twould wake suspicion.  
Hence to the Court of Guard.      [*Exit Bertone.*]

I think that scorn  
Doth fan love more than beauty. Twice to-day  
Have I paced patiently these royal halls,  
Like some expecting needy courtier. Swell not,  
Proud charmer, thy vast debt ! Where lag these  
Barons ?

Methinks this change might rouse—

[*Enter Calvi, followed by other Nobles.*]

Ha ! Calvi, welcome.

Calvi. A fair good morrow, D'Alba !

D'Alba.

Hast thou heard

These heavy tidings ? The young King—

[*Approaching to meet the other Lords  
as they enter.*]

My Lords,

Good morrow's out of date. Know ye the news?  
So men salute to-day.

Calvi.

Alfonso dead ?

D'Alba.

Murdered.

Calvi. And Melfi King.

D'Alba.

Aye. Here's a letter.

[*giving a letter to Calvi.*]

From the great Regent—Pshaw ! how my rude  
tongue

Stumbles at these new dignities !—the King.

Therefore I summoned ye. He will be here

Anon.

[*Enter Valore and other Nobles.*]

Valore, thou art late.

*Valore.*

This tale

Puts lead into men's heels. How fell it?

*D'Alba.*

Read!

Count Calvi! Read!

*Calvi. (reads)* "Alfonso being dead, and I hurt almost to death, they left me fainting on the ground, where I lay till a poor but honest muleteer bore me to his hut"—

He hath been wounded!

*D'Alba.*

He's alive. The boy!

Only the pretty boy! Read on. Read on.

*Calvi. (reads)* "Make known these missives to our loyal people. We shall follow them straight. From your loving cousin,

"THE KING."

*Valore.* The King. How he will wear his state! Why, D'Alba,

Thy worshipped Annabel chose well; she'll be A Queen.

*D'Alba.* Yet, my poor title, had she graced it, Comes by unquestion'd sheer descent, unstain'd By dark mysterious murder. My good fathers—Heaven rest their souls!—lie safely in the churchyard,

A simple race; whilst these high Princes—Sirs, These palace walls have echoes, or I'd tell ye—'Tis a deep riddle, but amongst them all The pretty boy is dead.

*Enter Leanti.*

Leanti!

*Leanti.* Lords,  
The King is at the gate.  
*D'Alba.* The King! Now, Sirs,  
Don your quick smiles, and bend your supple  
knees;—  
The King!

*Enter Melfi.*

(*Aside.*) He's pale, he hath been hurt. (*Aloud.*)  
My liege,  
Your vassals bid you welcome.

*Melfi.* Noble Signors,  
I greet you well. Thanks, D'Alba. Good Leanti,  
I joy to see those reverend locks. I never  
Thought to behold a friendly face again.  
And now I bring ye sorrow. Death hath been  
Too busy; though the ripe and bearded ear  
Escap'd his sickle—but ye know the tale;  
Ye welcomed me as King; and I am spared  
The painful repetition.

*Valore.* Sire, we know  
From your own royal hand enough for joy  
And sorrow: Death hath ta'en a goodly child  
And spared a glorious man. But how—

*Melfi.* My Lord,  
What wouldst thou more? Before I entered here  
Messina's general voice had hailed her Sovereign.  
Lacks but the ceremonial form. 'Twere best  
The accustomed pageant were performed even  
now,

Whilst ye, Sicilian Barons, strength and grace

Of our Sicilian realm, are here to pledge  
Solemn allegiance. Say I sooth, Count D'Alba?

*D'Alba.* In sooth, my liege, I know not. Seems  
to me

One form is wanting. Our bereaved state  
Stands like a widow, one eye dropping tears  
For her lost lord, the other turned with smiles  
On her new bridegroom. But even she, the Dame  
Of Ephesus, the buxom relict, famed  
For quick dispatch o'er every widowed mate,  
Woman, or state—even she, before she wed,  
Saw the good man entombed. The Funeral first;  
And then the Coronation.

*Melfi.*

Scoffer! Lords,

The corse is missing.

*Calvi.*

Ha! Perchance he lives?

*Melfi.* He fell, I tell thee.

*Valore.*

And the assassin?

*Melfi.*

He

Escaped, when I too fell.

*D'Alba.*

He! Why, my liege,

Was there but one?

*Melfi.*

What mean ye, Sirs? Stand off.

*D'Alba.* Cannot your Highness guess the murder-  
derer?

*Melfi.* Stand from about me, Lords! Dare ye  
to front

A King? What, do ye doubt me; you, or you?  
Dare ye to doubt me? Dare ye look a question  
Into mine eyes? Take thy gaze off! A King  
Demands a modester regard. Now, Sirs,  
What do ye seek? I tell ye, the fair boy

Fell underneath the assassin's sword ; and I,  
Wounded almost to death, am saved to prove  
My subjects' faith, to punish, to reward,  
To reign, I tell ye, nobles. Now, who questions?  
Who glares upon me now ? What ! are ye mute ?

*Leanti.* Deign to receive our homage, Sire, and  
pardon

The undesigned offence. Your Highness knows  
Count D'Alba's mood.

*Melfi.* And he knows mine. Well ! Well !  
Be all these heats forgotten.

*Calvi.* (to *D'Alba.*) How his eye  
Wanders around the circle,

*Melfi.* Ye are met,  
Barons of Sicily, in such august  
And full assemblage as may well beseem  
Your office, honour well yourselves and me ;  
Yet one is missing,—greatest, first and best,—  
My son. Knows not Prince Julian that his father  
Is here ? Will he not come ? Go some one say  
That I would see him.

[*Exit Calvi.*

*Valore.* Sire, the Prince hath lain  
Sick of a desperate malady.

*Melfi.* Alas !  
And I—Sick didst thou say ?

*Valore.* Eight days have passed  
Since he hath left his couch.

*Leanti.* He's better now.  
The gentle Princess, who with one young page  
Hath tended him——



*Melfi.* What page ?

*Leanti.* A stranger boy,  
Seen but of few, young Theodore.

*Melfi.* A stranger !  
Say on. The Princess—— ?

*Leanti.* As I crossed the hall  
I met her, with her own glad step, her look  
Of joy; and when I asked how fared Prince Julian?  
She put her white hands into mine, with such  
A smile, and then passed on.

*Melfi.* Without a word ?

*Leanti.* Without a word, save the mute eloquence  
Of that bright smile.

*D'Alba.* (*aside.*) Oh 'twas enough! on him!  
Smile on that dotard! Whilst I—(*aloud*) Why my  
lords

Here's a fine natural sympathy; the son  
Sickens at the father's wound! The very day!  
The very hour! He must have known the deed—  
Perhaps he knows the assassin——

*Melfi.* Stop.

*D'Alba.* My liege,  
I speak it in his honour. Many an heir  
Had been right glad to step into a throne  
Just as the mounting pulse of youth beat high;—  
A soldier too! and with a bride so fair,  
So delicate, so fashioned for a Queen  
By cunning nature. But he—for full surely  
He knew——

*Melfi.* Stop. No, no, no, he knew it not!  
He is my son.

*Enter Calvi, followed by Julian.*

*Calvi.* My liege, the Prince!

*Melfi.* Already!

Pardon me, good my lords, that I request  
A moment's loneliness. We have been near  
To death since last—Have touched upon the  
grave,  
And there are thoughts, which only our own  
hearts

Should hear. I pray ye pardon me. I'll join ye  
Within the hour for the procession.

*[Exeunt D'Alba, Leanti, Valore, Calvi, &c.]*

*Julian!*

*Jul.* Father!

*Melfi.* I know what thou would'st say. The hat  
And sable plumes concealed—No more of it.

*Jul.* Oh, Father!

*Melfi.* Rise, my son. Let us forget  
What—How is Annabel? They say she has been  
A faithful nurse. Thou hast been sick?

*Jul.* I'm well.

*Melfi.* Fie! when thou tremblest so.

*Jul.* I'm well. I have been  
Sick, brainsick, heartsick, mad. I thought—  
I feared—

It was a foretaste of the pains of Hell  
To be so mad and yet retain the sense  
Of that which made me so. But thou art here,  
And I — Oh nothing but a father's heart  
Could ever have forgiven!

*Melfi.* No more. No more!  
Thou hast not told me of thy wife.

*Jul.* She waits  
To pay her duty.

*Melfi.* Stay. Count D'Alba looked  
With evil eyes upon thee, and on me  
Cast his accustomed tauntings. Is there aught  
Amisss between ye?

*Jul.* No.

*Melfi.* He hath not yet  
Perhaps forgotten your long rivalry  
For Annabel's fair hand. A dangerous meaning  
Lurked in those bitter gibes. A dangerous foe  
Were D'Alba. Julian, the sea breeze to thee  
Brings health, and strength, and joy. I have an  
errand

As far as Madrid. None so well as thou  
Can bid it speed. Thou shalt away to day;—  
'Tis thy best medicine;—thou and thy young wife.  
The wind is fair.

*Jul.* To day!

*Melfi.* Have I not said?

*Jul.* Send me just risen from a sick couch to  
Madrid!  
Send me from home, from thee! Banish me!  
Father,  
Canst thou not bear my sight?

*Melfi.* I cannot bear  
Contention. Must I needs remind thee, Julian,  
I also have been ill?

*Jul.* I'll go to day.

How pale he is! I had not dared before  
To look upon his face. I'll go to day.

*Melfi.* This very hour?

*Jul.*

This very hour.

*Melfi.*

My son!

Now call thy—yet a moment. Where's the boy—  
He shall aboard with thee---thy pretty page?

*Jul.* The King? Mean'st thou the King?

*Melfi.*

He whom thou call'st ——

*Jul.* Wilt thou not say the King?

*Melfi.*

Young Theodore.

Hearken, Prince Julian! I am glad, right glad  
Of what hath chanced. 'Twas well to bring him  
hither,

And keep him at thy side. He shall away  
To Spain with thee, that Theodore—Forget  
All other titles. He'll be glad of this.  
A favourite page, a spoilt and petted boy,  
To lie in summer gardens, in the shade  
Of orange groves, whose pearly blossoms fall  
Amidst his clustering curls, and to his lute  
Sing tenderest ditties,—such his happy lot;  
Whilst I——Go, bring thy wife.

*Jul.*

He is the King.

*Melfi.* Call lady Annabel.

*Jul.*

The King, I say,

The rightful King, the only King! I'll shed  
The last drop in my veins for King Alfonso.

*Melfi.* Once I forgave thee. But to beard me  
thus,

And for a weak and peevish youth, a faintling,

A boy of a girl's temper ; one who shrinks  
Trembling and crouching at a look, a word,  
A lifted finger, like a beaten hound.

*Jul.* Alas, poor boy ! he hath no other friend  
Since thou, who should'st defend him—Father,  
Father,

Three months have scarcely passed since thy  
dear brother,

(Oh surely thou lovedst him !) with the last words  
He ever spake, besought thy guardian care  
Of his fair child. Next upon me he turned  
His dying eyes, quite speechless then, and thou—  
I could not speak, for poor Alfonso threw  
Himself upon my breast, with such a gush  
Of natural grief, I had no utterance—  
But thou didst vow for both protection, faith,  
Allegiance ; thou didst swear so fervently,  
So deeply, that the spirit flew to Heaven  
Smiling. I'll keep that oath.

*Melfi.*

Even if again thy sword—

*Jul.* Urge not that on me. 'Tis a fire  
Here in my heart, my brain. Bethink thee,  
Father,

Soldier or statesman, thine is the first name  
Of Sicily, the General, Regent, Prince,  
The unmatched in power, the unapproach'd in  
fame ;

What could that little word a King do more  
For thee ?

*Melfi.* That little word ! Why *that* is fame,  
And power and glory ! That shall fill the world,

Lend a whole age its name, and float along  
The stream of time, with such a buoyancy,  
As shall endure when palaces and tombs  
Are swept away like dust. That little word!  
Beshrew thy womanish heart that cannot feel  
Its spell!

*(Guns and shouts are heard without.)*

Hark! hark! the guns! I feel it now.  
I am proclaimed. Before I entered here  
'Twas known throughout the city that I lived,  
And the boy-king was dead.

*(Guns, bells, and shouts again.)*

Hark, King Rugiero!

Dost hear the bells, the shouts? Oh 'tis a proud  
And glorious feeling thus at once to live  
Within a thousand bounding hearts, to hear  
The strong out-gushing of that present fame  
For whose uncertain dim futurity  
Men toil and slay and die! Without a crime—  
I thank thee still for that—Without a crime—  
For he'll be happier—I am a King.

*(Shouts again.)*

Dost thou not hear Long live the King Rugiero?

*Jul.* The shout is weak.

*Melfi.*

Augment it by thy voice.

Would the words choak Prince Julian? Cannot he  
Wish long life to his Father?

*Jul.*

Live, my Father!

Long live the Duke of Melfi!

*Melfi.*

Live the King!

*Jul.* Long live the King Alfonso!

*Melfi.* Now, by Heaven,  
Thou art still brainsick. There is a contagion  
In the soft dreamy nature of that child,  
That thou, a soldier—I was overproud  
Of thee and thy young fame. That lofty brow  
Seem'd form'd to wear a crown. Chiefly for  
thee—

Where is the Page?

*Jul.* Oh Father, once again  
Take pity on us all! For me! For me!  
Thou hast always been to me the kindest,  
fondest—

Preventing all my wishes—I'll not reason,  
I'll not contend with thee. Here at thy feet,  
Prostrate in spirit as in form, I cry  
For mercy! Save me from despair! from sin!

*Melfi.* Unmanly, rise! lest in that slavish posture  
I treat thee as a slave.

*Jul.* Strike an thou wilt,  
Thy words pierce deeper, to the very core!  
Strike an thou wilt; but hear me. Oh my Father,  
I do conjure thee, by that name, by all  
The boundless love it guerdons, spare my soul  
This bitterness!

*Melfi.* I'll reign.

*Jul.* Aye, reign indeed;  
Rule over mightier realms; be conqueror  
Of crowned passions; king of thy own mind.  
I've ever loved thee as a son, do this  
And I shall worship thee. I will cling to thee;  
Thou shalt not shake me off.

*Melfi.* Go to ; thou art mad.

*Jul.* Not yet ; but thou may'st make me so.

*Melfi.* I'll make thee

The heir of a fair crown.

*Jul.* Not all the powers

Of all the earth can force upon my brow

That heritage of guilt. Cannot I die ?

But that were happiness. I'd rather drag

A weary life beneath the silent rule

Of the stern Trappist, digging my own grave,

Myself a living corse, cut off from the sweet

And natural kindness that man shews to man ;

I'd rather hang, a hermit, on the steep

Of horrid Etna, between snow and fire ;

Rather than sit a crown'd and honour'd prince

Guarded by children, tributaries, friends,

On an usurper's throne.

(*Guns without.*)

*Melfi.* I must away.

We'll talk of this anon. Where is the boy.

*Jul.*

Safe.

*Melfi.* Trifle not with my impatience, Julian ;

Produce the child. Howe'er thou may deny

Allegiance to the king, obey thy father.

*Jul.* I had a father.

*Melfi.*

Ha!

*Jul.*

But he gave up

Faith, loyalty, and honour, and pure fame,

And his own son.

*Melfi.*

My son !

*Jul.*

I loved him once,



And dearly. Still too dearly! But with all  
That burning, aching, passionate old love  
Wrestling within my breast; even face to face;  
Those eyes upon me; and that trembling hand  
Thrilling my very heart strings—Take it off!  
In mercy take it off!—Still I renounce thee.  
Thou hast no son. I have no father. Go  
Down to a childless grave.

*Melfi.* Even from the grave  
A father's curse may reach thee, clinging to thee  
Cold as a dead man's shroud, shadowing thy days,  
Haunting thy dreams, and hanging, a thick cloud,  
'Twixt thee and Heaven. Then, when perchance  
thine own  
Small prattling pretty ones shall climb thy knee  
And bid thee bless them, think of thy dead father,  
And groan as thou dost now.

*(Guns again.*

Hark! 'tis the hour!  
I must away. Back to thy chamber, son,  
And chuse if I shall curse thee.

*(Exit Melfi.*

*Jul.* Did he curse me?  
Did he? Am I that withered, blasted wretch?  
Is that the fire that burns my brain? Not yet!  
Oh do not curse me yet! He's gone. The boy!  
The boy!

*(Rushes out.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

## A C T III.

## SCENE.

*A Magnificent Cathedral. A Gothic Monument in the Foreground, with Steps round it, and the Figure of an old Warrior on the top.*

*D'Alba, Leanti, Valore, Calvi, and other Nobles.*

*Calvi.* Where stays the King?

*Leanti.* He's robing to assume

The Crown.

*Calvi.* What a gloom reigns in the Cathedral!  
Where are the people, who should make and grace  
This pageant?

*Valore.* 'Tis too sudden.

*D'Alba.*

Saw ye not

How coldly, as the slow procession moved,  
Men's eyes were fixed upon him? Silently  
We passed amidst dull silence. I could hear  
The chink of money, which the heralds flung,  
Reverberate on the pavement. They, who stooped  
To gather up the coin, looked on the impress  
Of young Alfonso, sighed and shook their heads  
As 'twere his funeral.

*Calvi.* Methinks this place  
The general tomb of his high line doth cry  
Shame on us ! The mute citizens do mourn him  
Better than we.

*D'Alba.* Therefore the gates are closed,  
And none but peers of Sicily may pass  
The guarded doors.

*Leanti.* Where is Prince Julian ?

*D'Alba.* Sick.  
Here comes the Mighty One, and the great Prelates  
That shall anoint his haughty brow ; 'tis bent  
With a stern joy.

*Enter Melfi, in Royal Robes, preceded by Nobles,  
Officers, &c. bearing the Crown, Archbishop, Bishops,  
&c.*

*Melfi.* No ! To no tapered shrine.  
Here, reverend Fathers, here ! This is my altar :  
The tomb of my great ancestor, who first  
Won from the Paynim this Sicilian crown,  
And wore it gloriously ; whose name I bear  
As I will bear his honour'd sceptre. Here,  
At this most kingly altar, will I plight  
My vow to Sicily, the nuptial vow  
That links my fate to her's. Here I'll receive  
Her Barons' answering faith. Hear me, thou  
shade  
Of great Rugiero, whilst I swear to guard  
With heart and hand the realm thy valour won,

The laws thy wisdom framed—brave legacy  
To prince and people! To defend their rights,  
To rule in truth and justice, peacefully,  
If peace may be; and with the awful arm  
Of lawful power to sweep the oppressor off  
From thy blest Isle; to be the Peasants' King—  
Nobles, hear that!—the Peasants' King and yours!  
Look down, Ancestral Spirit, on my oath,  
And sanctify and bless it! Now the crown.

*D'Alba.* What noise is at the gate?

*Melfi.* Crown me, I say.

*Archb.* 'Tis fallen! Save us from the ill omen!

*Melfi.* Save us

From thy dull hands, old dotard! Thou a Priest,  
And tremble at the touch of power! Give me  
The crown.

*D'Alba.* It fits thee not.

*Melfi.* Give me the crown,

And with a steady grasp it shall endue  
These throbbing brows that burn till they be  
bound  
With that bright diadem.

*Enter Julian and Alfonso.*

*Jul.* Stop. Place it here!  
This is the King! the real, the only King!  
The living King Alfonso!

*Melfi.* Out, foul traitor!  
'Tis an impostor.

*Jul.* Look on him, Count D'Alba!  
Calvi, Valore, look! Ye know him well.

D

And ye that never saw him, know ye not  
His father's lineaments? Remove thy hand  
From that fair forehead. 'Tis the pallid brow  
Bent into pensiveness, the dropping eyelid,  
The womanish changing cheek—his very self!  
Look on him. Do ye know him? Do ye own  
Your King?

*Calvi.* 'Tis he.

*D'Alba.* The boy himself!

*Jul.* Now place

The crown upon his head; and hear me swear,  
Low at his feet, as subject, kinsman, Prince,  
Allegiance.

*Alf.* Rise, dear Cousin.

*Jul.* Father, kneel,  
Kneel here with me, thou his first subject, thou  
The guardian of the state, kneel first, and vow  
Thy princely fealty.

*Melfi.* Hence, abject slave!

And thou, young minion——

*Jul. to Alf.* Fear not. Father, kneel!

Look where thou art. This is no place, my lord,  
To dally with thy duty: underneath  
Thy fathers' sleep; above their banners wave  
Heavily. Death is round about us, Death  
And Fame. Have they no voice for thee? Not  
one,

Of one long storied line but lived and died  
A pure and faithful Knight, and left his son  
Honour—proud heritage! I am thine heir,  
And I demand that bright inheritance  
Unstained, undimmed. Kneel, I implore thee! I,  
Thy son.

*Melfi.* Off, cursed viper!  
Off, ere I hurl thee on the stones!

*Jul.* I've done  
My duty. Was it not my duty?

*Alf.* Julian,  
Sit here by me; here on the steps.

*D'Alba.* Again  
We must demand of thee, my Lord of Melfi,  
How chanced this tale of murder? Here's our  
Prince,  
Safe and unhurt. But where's the assassin?  
Where

The regicide? Where he that wounded thee?

*Melfi.* (*pointing to Julian*) Demand of him.

*D'Alba.* Where be these murderers?  
Art sure thou saw'st them, Duke? Or was't a  
freak

Of the deft Fay Morgana? Didst thou feel  
The trenchant blade? Or was the hurt thou  
talk'st of

A fairy wound, a phantasm? Once again  
I warn thee, speak.

*Melfi.* Demand Prince Julian, Sir.  
This work is his.

*D'Alba.* He speaks not. Little King,  
What say'st thou?

*Alf.* Julian saved me.

*D'Alba.* Saved! From whom?  
From what!

*Alf.* A king should have no memory  
But for good deeds. My lords, an it so please you,  
We'll to the Palace. I'll not wear to-day

This crown. Some fitting season ; but not now.  
I'm weary. Let us home.

*D'Alba.* Aye, take him hence.  
Home with him, Count Valore. Stay by him  
Till I come to ye. Leave him not. Nay, Calvi,  
Remain. Hence with the boy.

*Alf.* My Cousin Julian,  
Wilt thou not go with us ?

*Jul.* I've done my duty.  
Was't not my duty ? But look there ! look there !  
I cannot go with thee. I am his now.  
All his.

*Alf.* Uncle——

*Melfi.* Away, bright spotted worm——

*D'Alba.* What, ho ! the guard !

*Alf.* My lord, where Julian is  
I need no guard. Question no more of this,  
But follow us.

[*Exeunt Alfonso, Valore, and other nobles.*]

*Melfi.* I do condemn myself  
That I hold silence. Warriors, kinsmen, friends,  
Barons of Sicily, the valiant princes  
Of this most fertile and thrice famous Isle,  
Hear me ! What yonder crafty Count hath dared,  
With subtle question and derisive smile,  
To slide into a meaning, is as true  
As he is false. I would be King ; I'd reign  
Over fair Sicily ; I'd call myself  
Your Sovereign, Princes ; thine, Count D'Alba,  
thine,

Calvi, and old Leanti—we were comrades  
Many a year in the rough path of war:

And now ye know me all. I'll be a King  
Fit for this warlike nation, which brooks sway  
Only of men. Yon slight fair boy is born  
With a woman's heart. Let him go tell his beads  
For us and for our kingdom, I'll be King.

I'll lend unto that title such a name,  
As shall enchain this bauble with one blaze  
Of honour. I'll lead on to glory, lords,  
And ye shall shine in the brightness of my fame  
As planets round the sun. What say ye?

*D'Alba.*

Never!

*Calvi, &c.* Never!

*Melfi.* Say thou, Leanti, thou'rt a soldier  
Worthy of the name,—a brave one! What say'st  
thou?

*Leanti.* If young Alfonso——

*D'Alba.* Peace. Why this is well.

This morning I received a tale—I'm not  
An over-believer in man's excellence;  
I know that in this slippery path of life  
The firmest foot may fail; that there have been  
Ere now ambitious generals, grasping heirs,  
Unnatural kinsmen, foul usurpers, murderers!—  
I know that man is frail, and might have fallen  
Though Eve had never lived,—Albeit I own  
The smiling mischief's potency. But this,  
This tale was made up of such several sins,  
All of them devilish, treason, treachery,  
And pitiless cruelty made murder pale  
With their red shame,—I doubt not readily  
When man and guilt are joined—but this the  
common



And general sympathy that links our kind  
Forbade to believe. Yet now before you all,  
His peers and mine, before the vacant throne  
He sought to usurp, before the crown that fell  
As conscious from his brow, I do arraign  
Rugiero, Duke of Melfi, General, Peer,  
Regent and Prince, of Treason.

*Melfi.*

Treason! D'Alba,

We quarrel not for words. Let these but follow  
And bold emprise shall bear a happier name.  
Sicilians, have ye lost your Island spirit?  
Barons, is your ancient bravery tamed down  
By this vain scoffer? I'll to the people. They  
Love their old soldier.

*D'Alba.*

Stop. Duke, I arraign thee  
Of murder; planned, designed, attempted murder,  
Though incomplete, on the thrice sacred person  
Of young Alfonso, kinsman, ward, and King.  
Wilt thou defend this too? Was't a brave deed  
To draw the assassin's sword on that poor child?  
Seize him!

*Melfi.* Come near who dares! Where be thy  
proofs?

Where be thy witnesses?

*D'Alba.* There's one. Prince Julian,

Rouse thee! He sits erect and motionless  
As yon ancestral image. Doth he breathe?  
Rouse thee, and answer, as before thy God,  
As there is truth in Heaven, Didst thou not see  
Thy father's sword at young Alfonso's breast?  
Lay not the boy, already dead with fear,  
At his false guardian's feet? Answer!

*Melfi.* Aye, speak,  
Prince Julian! Dost thou falter now? On, on,  
And drive the dagger home! On, on, I say.

*Calvi.* We wait your Highness' answer.

*Jul.* Which among ye  
Dares question me? What are ye, Sirs?

*D'Alba.* The States  
Of Sicily.

*Jul.* The States! Without a head!  
Without a King! Without a Regent! States!  
The States! Are ye the States that 'gainst all  
form

Of justice or of guardian law drive on  
To bloody trial, him your Greatest? Here, too!  
Here! Will ye build up scaffolds in your  
churches?

And turn grave priests to beadsmen? I'll not  
answer.

*Calvi.* The rack may force thee.

*D'Alva.* He but smiles. Convey  
The Duke to the Hall of Justice. We shall  
follow.

Go summon Juan Castro thither. Hence!  
Why loiter ye?

*Melfi.* A word with thee, Prince Julian.  
I pray ye listen, 'tis no treason, lords.  
I would but say, finish thy work. Play well  
The part that thou hast chosen. Cast aside  
All filial yearnings. Be a gallant foe.  
Rush onward through the fight. Trample me  
down.

Tread on my neck. Be perfect in that quality

Which thou call'st justice. Quell thy womanish  
weakness.

Let me respect the enemy, whom once  
I thought my Son.

*Jul.* Once, Father!

*Melfi.* I'm no Father!

Rouse not my soul to curse thee! Tempt me not  
To curse thy Mother—She whom once I deemed  
A saint in purity; Be resolute,  
Falter not with them. Lie not.

*Jul.* Did I ever?

*Melfi.* Finish thy work. On, soldiers!

*(Exit Melfi, guarded.)*

*D'Alba.* Answer, Prince!

The Duke, as thou hast heard, disclaims thee.

*Jul.* Dare not

A man of ye say that. I am his son—  
Tremble lest my sword should prove me so ;—a  
part

Of his own being. He gave me this life,  
These senses, these affections. The quick blood  
That knocks so strongly at my heart is his—  
Would I might spill it for him! Had ye no  
fathers,

Have ye no sons, that ye would train men up  
In parricide? I will not answer ye.

*D'Alba.* This passion is thy answer. Could'st  
thou say

No; in that simple word were more comprised  
Than in a world of fiery eloquence.

Canst thou not utter No? 'Tis short and easy,  
The first sound that a stuttering babe will lisp  
To his fond nurse,—yet thy tongue stammers at it!

I ask him if his father be at once  
Traitor and Murderer, and he cannot say,  
No!

*Jul.* Subtle blood-thirsty fiend! I'll answer  
To nought that thou canst ask. Murderer! The  
king

Lives. Seek of him. One truth I'll tell thee,  
D'Alba,

And then the record of that night shall pass  
Down to the grave in silence. But one sword  
Was stained with blood in yonder glen—'twas  
mine!

I am the only guilty. This I swear  
Before the all-seeing God, whose quenchless gaze  
Pierced through that twilight hour. Now con-  
demn

The Duke of Melfi an ye dare! I'll speak.  
No more on this foul question.

*Leanti.* Thou the guilty?

Thou!

*Jul.* I have said it.

*D'Alba.* I had heard a tale—

*Leanti.* This must be sifted.

*D'Alba.* In that twilight hour  
A mortal eye beheld them. An old Spaniard,  
One of the guard—By Heaven it is a tale  
So bloody, so unnatural, man may scarce  
Believe it!

*Leanti.* And the king still lives.

*D'Alba.* Why 'tis

A mystery. Let's to the Hall of Justice  
And hear this soldier. Sir, they are ambitious,  
Father and son—We can pass judgment there,

This is no place;—Leanti, more ambitious  
Than thou canst guess.

*Jul.* Aye, by a thousand fold !  
I am an eaglet born, and can drink in  
The sunlight, when the blinking owls go darkling,  
Dazzled and blinded by the day. Ambitious !  
I have had day dreams would have shamed the  
visions

Of that great Master of the world, who wept  
For other worlds to conquer. I'd have lived  
An age of sinless glory, and gone down  
Storied and epitaphed and chronicled,  
To the very end of time. Now—But I still  
May suffer bravely, may die as a Prince,  
A Man. Ye go to judgment. Lords, remember  
I am the only guilty.

*Calvi.* We must needs,  
On such confession, give you into charge .  
A prisoner. Ho ! Captain.

*Leanti.* Goes he with us ?

*D'Alba.* No ; for the hall is near, and they are  
best

Questioned apart. Walk by me, good Leanti,  
And I will shew thee why.

*Leanti.* Is't possible  
That Julian stabb'd his father ?

*D'Alba.* No. Thou saw'st  
They met as friends ; no ! no !

[*Exeunt Calvi and other Lords.*]

*Enter Annabel.*

*Ann.* Where is he ? Where ?  
*Julian !*

*D'Alba.* Fair Princess—

*Ann.* Stay me not. My Julian!

*D'Alba.* Oh, how she sinks her head upon his arm!

How her curls kiss his cheek! and her white hand  
Lies upon his! The cold and sluggish husband!  
He doth not clasp that loveliest hand, which  
nature

Fashioned to gather roses, or to hold  
Bunches of bursting grapes.

*Leanti.* Count D'Alba, see,

We are alone. Wilt thou not come?

*D'Alba.* Anon.

Now he hath seized her hand, hath dared to  
grasp,

He shall not hold it long.

*Leanti.* They'll wait us, Count.

*D'Alba.* That white hand shall be mine.

[*Exeunt D'Alba and Leanti.*

*Jul.* My Annabel,

Why art thou here?

*Ann.* They said—I was a fool

That believed them!—Constance said she heard  
a cry,

Down with the Melfi! and the rumour ran  
That there had been a fray, that thou wast slain.  
But thou art safe, my Julian?

*Jul.* As thou seest.

Thou art breathless still.

*Ann.* Aye. I flew through the streets,  
Piercing the crowds like light. I was a fool;  
But thou hadst left me on a sudden, bearing

The young Alfonso with thee, high resolve  
Fixed in thine eye. I knew not—Love is  
fearful;

• And I have learnt to fear.

*Jul.* Thou tremblest still.

*Ann.* The Church is cold and lonely; and that  
seat,

At the foot of yon grim warrior, all too damp  
For thee. I like not thus to see thee, Julian,  
Upon a tomb. Thou must submit thee still  
To thy poor nurse. Home! By the way thou'lt  
tell me

What hath befallen. Where is Alfonso?

*Jul.*

Say

The King! the rightful, the acknowledged King!  
Annabel, this rude stone's the effigy  
Of the founder of our line; the gallant chief  
Who swept away the Saracen, and quelled  
Fierce civil broils; and, when the people's choice  
Crowned him, lived guardian of their rights, and  
died

Wept by them as a father. And methinks  
To-day I do not shame my ancestor;  
I dare to sit here at his feet, and feel  
He would not spurn his son. Thou dost not grieve  
To lose a crown, my fairest?

*Ann.*

Oh no! no!

I'm only proud of thee. Thy fame's my crown.

*Jul.* Not fame but conscience is the enduring  
crown,

And wearing that impearled, why to lose fame  
Or life were nothing.

*Ann.* Where's thy father, Julian?  
Forgive me, I have pained thee.

*Jul.* No. The pang  
Is mastered. Where? He is a prisoner  
Before the States. I am a prisoner here.  
These are my guards. Be calmer, Sweetest. Rend  
not

This holy place with shrieks.

*Ann.* They seek thy life!  
They'll sentence thee! They'll kill thee! No!  
they shall not,  
Unless they kill me first. What crime—O God,  
To talk of crime and thee!—What falsest charge  
Dare they to bring?

*Jul.* Somewhat of yon sad night  
They know.

*Ann.* Where's Theodore? the page? the King?  
Doth he accuse thee too?

*Jul.* Poor gentle Cousin!  
He is as innocent as thou.

*Ann.* I'll fetch him.  
We'll go together to the States. We'll save thee.  
We, feeble though we be, woman and boy,  
We'll save thee. Hold me not!

*Jul.* Where would'st thou go?

*Ann.* To the States.

*Jul.* And there?

*Ann.* I'll tell the truth, the truth,  
The irresistible truth! Let go. A moment  
May cost thy life,—our lives. Nothing but truth,  
That's all thy cause can need. Let go.



*Jul.*  
My father?

And he,

*Ann.* What's a thousand such as he,  
To thee, my husband! But he shall be safe.  
He is thy father. I'll say nought can harm him.  
He was ever kind to me! I'll pray for him.  
Nay, an thou fear'st me, Julian, I'll not speak  
One word; I'll only kneel before them all,  
Lift up my hands, and pray in my inmost heart,  
As I pray to God.

*Jul.* My loving wife, to Him  
Pray, to Him only. Leave me not, my dearest;  
There is a peace around us in this pause,  
This interval of torture. I'm content  
And strong to suffer. Be thou—

*Enter D'Alba, Calvi, Leanti, and Nobles.*

Ha! returned  
Already! This is quick. But I'm prepared.  
The sentence!

*Ann.* Tell it not! Ye are his Judges.  
Ye have the power of life or death. Your words  
Are fate. Oh speak not yet! Listen to me.

*D'Alba.* Aye; a long summer day! What  
would'st thou?

*Ann.* Save him!  
Save him!

*D'Alba.* He shall not die.

*Ann.* Now bless thee, D'Alba!  
Bless thee! He's safe! He's free!

*Jul.* Once more I ask  
His doom, for that is mine. If ye have dared,

In mockery of justice, to arraign  
And sentence your great Ruler, with less pause  
Than a petty thief taken in the manner, what's  
Our doom?

*D'Alba.* Sir, our great ruler (we that love not  
Law's tedious circumstance may thank him) spared  
All trial by confession. He avowed  
Treason and regicide; and all that thou  
Hadst said or might say, he avouched unheard  
For truth; then cried, as thou hast done, for  
judgment,  
For death.

*Jul.* I can die too.

*Leanti.* A milder doom  
Unites ye. We have spared the royal blood.

*D'Alba.* Only the blood. Estates and honours  
all

Are forfeit to the King; the assembled states  
Banish ye; the most holy Church declares ye  
Beneath her ban. This is your sentence, Sir.  
A Herald waits to read it in the streets  
Before ye, and from out the city gate  
To thrust ye, outlawed, excommunicate,  
Infamous amongst men. Ere noon to-morrow  
Ye must depart from Sicily; on pain  
Of death to ye the outlaws, death to all  
That harbour ye, death to whoe'er shall give  
Food, shelter, comfort, speech. So pass ye forth  
In infamy!

*Ann.* Eternal infamy  
Rest on your heads, false judges! Outlawed!  
Banished!

Bereft of state and title! Thou art still  
 Best of the good, greatest amongst the great,  
 My Julian! Must they die that give thee food  
 And rest and comfort? I shall comfort thee,  
 I thy true wife! I'll never leave thee. Never!  
 We'll walk together to the gate, my hand  
 In thine, as lovers. Let's set forth. We'll go  
 Together.

*Jul.* Aye; but not to-night. I'll meet thee  
 To-morrow at the harbour.

*Ann.* No! no! no!  
 I will not leave thee.

*Jul.* Cling not thus. She trembles.  
 She cannot walk. Brave Sir, we have been com-  
 rades;

There is a pity in thine eye, which well  
 Beseems a soldier. Take this weeping lady  
 To King Alfonso. Tell the royal boy  
 One, who was once his Cousin and his friend,  
 Commends her to him. Go. To-morrow, dearest,  
 We'll meet again. Now for the sentence. Lords,  
 I question not your power. I submit  
 To all, even to this shame. Be quick! be quick!  
 [Exeunt.]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.

*An Apartment in the Royal Palace.*

*D'Alba, Bertone.*

*D'Alba.* I've parted them at last. The livelong  
night

The little King lay, like a page, before  
Her chamber door; and ever as he heard  
A struggling sigh within, he cried, alas!  
And echoed back her moan, and uttered words  
Of comfort. Happy boy.

*Bert.* But he is gone  
Towards the gate: be sure to meet Prince Julian.

*D'Alba.* For that I care not, so that I secure  
The vision which once flitted from my grasp  
And vanished like a rainbow.

*Bert.* Yet is Julian  
Still dangerous.

*D'Alba.* Why after noon to day—  
And see the sun's already high!—he dies  
If he be found in Sicily. Take thou

Two resolute comrades to pursue his steps,  
Soon as the time be past. Didst thou not hear  
The proclamation? Know'st thou where he bides?  
And Melfi?

*Bert.* Good, my lord, 'tis said the Duke  
Is dead.

*D'Alba.* Dead!

*Ber.* Certain 'tis that yesternight  
He walked from out the Judgment Hall like one  
Dreaming, with eyes that saw not, ears that heard  
No sound, staggering and tottering like old age  
Or infancy. And when the kingly robe  
Was plucked from him, and he forced from the  
gate,

A deep wound in his side burst forth; the blood  
Welled like a fountain.

*D'Alba.* And he died?

*Bert.* He fell

Fainting; and Julian, who had tended him  
Silently, with a spirit so absorbed  
His own shame seemed unfelt, fell on his neck  
Shrieking like maddening woman. There we left  
him,

And there 'tis said he hath outwatched the night.

*D'Alba.* There on the ground?

*Bert.* So please you.

*D'Alba.* Thou hast known

A softer couch, Prince Julian. Is the litter  
Prepared? And the old groom?

*Bert.* My lord, he waits  
Your pleasure.

*D'Alba.* Call him hither.

[*Exit Bertone.*

Blood welled out  
From a deep wound! Said old Leanti sooth?  
No matter! Either way he's guilty.

*Re-enter Bertone with Renzi.*

Ha!

A reverend knave. Wast thou Prince Julian's  
                  hunter?

*Renzi.* An please you, Sir, I was.

*D'Alba.* Dost know the Princess?—

Doth she know thee?

*Renzi.* Full well, my Lord. I tended  
Prince Julian's favourite greyhound. It was  
                  strange

How Lelia loved my lady,—the poor fool  
Hath pined for her this week past,—and my lady  
Loved Lelia. She would stroke her glossy head,  
And note her sparkling eyes, and watch her  
                  gambols,

And talk of Lelia's beauty, Lelia's speed,  
Till I was weary.

*D'Alba.* And the angel deemed  
This slave as faithful as her dog! The better.  
Dost thou love ducats, Renzi?

(*Tossing him a purse.*

Canst thou grace  
A lie with tongue and look and action?

*Renzi.*

Aye.

*D'Alba.* Go to the Princess; say thy master  
sent thee  
To guide her to him, or the young Alfonso,—  
Use either name, or both. Spare not for tears,  
Or curses. Lead her to the litter; see  
That Constance follows not. Bertone 'll gain  
Admittance for thee. Go.

*(Exit Renzi.)*

Bertone seek me  
A supple churchman;—Know'st thou any? One  
Not scrupulous; one who loves gold, and laughs  
At conscience. Bring him to me. I must hasten  
Silently home. Let not the Princess guess  
That I have left the palace.

*Bert.*

No, my Lord.

*(Exeunt severally.)*

## SCENE II.

*The Country just without the Gates of Messina.  
A hilly back Ground.*

*Melfi, lying on the Stage, Julian.*

*Jul.* He wakes! He is not dead! I am not yet  
A parricide. I dare not look on him;  
I dare not speak.

*Melfi.*

Water! My throat is scorched.

*(Exit Julian.)*

My tongue cleaves to my mouth. Water! Will  
none

Go fetch me water? Am I here alone?  
Here on the bloody ground, as on that night—  
Am I there still? No! I remember now.  
Yesterday I was King; to-day I'm nothing;  
Cast down by my own son; stabbed in my fame;  
Branded and done to death; an outlaw where  
I ruled! He, whom I loved with such a pride,  
With such a fondness, hath done this; and I,  
I have not strength to drag me to his presence  
That I might rain down curses on his head,  
Might blast him with a look.

*Enter Julian.*

*Jul.* Here's water. Drink!

*Melfi.* What voice is that? Why dost thou  
shroud thy face?

Dost shame to shew thyself? Who art thou?

*Jul.*

Drink:

I pray thee drink.

*Melfi.* Is't poison?

*Jul.*

'Tis the pure

And limpid gushing of a natural spring  
Close by yon olive ground. A little child,  
Who stood beside the fount, watching the bright  
And many-coloured pebbles, as they seemed  
To dance in the bubbling water, filled for me  
Her beechen cup, with her small innocent hand,  
And bade our Lady bless the draught! Oh drink!  
Have faith in such a blessing!

*Melfi.* Thou should'st bring



Nothing but poison. Hence, accursed cup!  
I'll perish in my thirst. I know thee, Sir.

*Jul.*

Father!

*Melfi.* I have no son. I had one once,  
A gallant gentleman; but he—What, Sir,  
Didst thou never hear of that Sicilian Prince,  
Who made the fabulous tale of Greece a truth,  
And slew his father? The old Laius fell  
At once, unknowing and unknown; but this  
New Œdipus, he stabbed and stabbed and stabbed,  
And the poor wretch cannot die.

*Jul.*

I think my heart

Is iron that it breaks not.

*Melfi.*

I should curse him—

And yet—Dost thou not know that I'm an outlaw,  
Under the ban? They stand in danger, Sir,  
That talk to me.

*Jul.*

I am an outlaw too.

Thy fate is mine. Our sentence is alike.

*Melfi.* What! have they banished thee?

*Jul.* I should have gone,

In very truth, I should have gone with thee,  
Aye to the end of the world.

*Melfi.* What banish thee!

Oh, foul ingratitude! Weak changeling boy!

*Jul.* He knows it not. Father, this banishment  
Came as a comfort to me, set me free  
From warring duties and fatiguing cares,  
And left me wholly thine. We shall be happy;  
For she goes with us, who will prop thy steps,  
As once the maid of Thebes, Antigone,

In that old tale. Chuse thou whatever land,—  
All are alike to us. But pardon me!  
Say thou hast pardoned me!

*Melfi.* My virtuous son!

*Jul.* Oh thanks to thee and Heaven! He sinks;  
he's faint;

His lips wax pale. I'll seek the spring once more:  
'Tis thirst.

*Melfi.* What music's that?

*Jul.* I hear none.

*Melfi.* Hark!

*Jul.* Thou art weak and dizzy.

*Melfi.* Angels of the air,  
Cherub and Seraph sometimes watch around  
The dying, and the mortal sense, at pause  
'Twixt life and death, doth drink in a faint echo  
Of heavenly harpings?

*Jul.* I have heard so.

*Melfi.* Aye;  
But they were just men, Julian! They were holy.  
They were not traitors.

*Jul.* Strive against these thoughts—  
Thou wast a brave man, Father!—fight against  
them,  
As 'gainst the Paynims thy old foes. He grows  
Paler and paler. Water from the spring;  
Or generous wine;—I saw a cottage near.  
Rest thee, dear Father, till I come.

[*Erit Julian.*

*Melfi.* Again  
That music! It is mortal; it draws nearer.

No. But if men should pass must I lie here  
Like a crushed adder? Here in the highway  
Trampled beneath their feet?—So! So! I'll  
crawl

To yonder bank. Oh that it were the deck  
Of some great Admiral, and I alone  
Boarding amidst a hundred swords! the breach  
Of some strong citadel, and I the first  
To mount in the cannon's mouth! I was brave  
once.

Oh for the common undistinguished death  
Of battle, pressed by horse's heels, or crushed  
By falling towers! Any thing but to lie  
Here like a leper!

*Enter Alfonso, Valore, and Calvi.*

*Alf.* 'Tis the spot where Julian—  
And yet I see him not. I'll pause awhile;  
'Tis likely he'll return. I'll wait.

*Calvi.* My liege,  
You're sad to day.

*Alf.* I have good cause to be so.  
*Val.* Nay, nay, cheer up.

*Alf.* Didst thou not tell me, Sir,  
That my poor Uncle's banished, outlawed, laid  
Under the church's ban?

*Calvi.* He would have slain  
His Sovereign.

*Alf.* I ne'er said it. Yesterday  
I found you at his feet. Oh, would to Heaven

That crown were on his head, and I — What's that?

*Val.* The moaning wind.

*Calvi.* He was a traitor, Sire,

*Alf.* He was my kinsman still. And Julian!  
Julian!

My Cousin Julian! he who saved my life,  
Whose only crime it was to be too good,  
Too great, too well beloved,—to banish him!  
To tear him from my arms!

*Calvi.* Sire, he confessed——

*Alf.* Ye should have questioned me. Sirs, I'm  
a boy,

A powerless, friendless boy, whose name is used  
To cover foul oppression. If I live  
To grasp a sword—but ye will break my heart  
Before that hour. Whence come those groans?

[*Seeing Melfi.*

My Uncle

Stretched on the ground, and none to tend thee!

Rest

Thy head upon my arm. Where's Julian? Sure  
I thought to find him with thee. Nay, be still;  
Strive not to move.

*Melfi.* I fain would kneel to thee  
For pardon.

*Calvi.* Listen not, my liege. The States  
Sentenced the Duke of Melfi; thou hast not  
The power to pardon. Leave him to his fate.

*Val.* 'Twere best your Highness came with us.

*Alf.*

Avoid

The place! Leave us, cold, courtly lords! Avoid  
My sight! Leave us, I say. Send instant suc-  
cour,

Food, water, wine, and men with hearts, if courts  
May breed such. Leave us.

[*Exeunt Cavi and Valore.*]*Melfi.*

Gallant boy!

*Alf.*

Alas!

I have no power.

*Melfi.*

For all I need thou hast.

Give me but six feet of Sicilian earth,  
And thy sweet pardon.

*Alf.*

Talk not thus. I'll grow

At once into a man, into a king,  
And they shall tremble, and turn pale with fear.  
Who now have dared——

*Enter Julian.*

Julian!

*Jul.*

Here's water! Ha!

Alfonso! I thought Pity had been dead.  
I craved a little wine, for the dear love  
Of Heaven, for a poor dying man; and all  
Turned from my prayer. Drink, Father.

*Alf.*

I have sent

For succour.

*Jul.*

Gentle heart!

*Melfi.*

The time is past.

Music again.

*Alf.* Aye; 'tis the shepherd's pipe  
From yonder craggy mountain. How it swings  
Upon the wind, now pausing, now renewed,  
Regular as a bell.

*Melfi.* A passing bell.

*Alf.* Cast off these heavy thoughts.

*Melfi.* Turn me.

*Alf.* He bleeds!

The blood wells out.

*Melfi.* It eases me.

*Jul.* He sinks!

He dies! Off! he's my father. Rest on me.

*Melfi.* Bless thee.

*Jul.* Oh, no! no! no! I cannot bear  
Thy blessing. Twice to stab, and twice forgiven—  
Oh curse me rather!

*Melfi.* Bless ye both.

[*Dies.*

*Alf.* He's dead,

And surely he died penitent. That thought  
Hath in it a deep comfort. The freed spirit  
Gushed out in a full tide of pardoning love.  
He blest us both, my Julian; even me  
As I had been his son. We'll pray for him  
Together, and thy Annabel shall join  
Her purest orisons. I left her stretched  
In a deep slumber. All night long she watched  
And wept for him and thee; but now she sleeps.  
Shall I go fetch her? She, better than I,  
Would soothe thee. Dost thou hear? He writhes  
as though

The struggling grief would choke him. Rouse  
thee. Julian,

Calm thee. Thou frighten'st me.

*Jul* . . . . . Am I not calm?

There is my sword. Go.

*Alf.* . . . . . I'll not leave thee.

*Jul.* . . . . . King!

Dost thou not see we've killed him? Thou had'st  
cause;

But I, that was his Son.—Home to thy Palace!  
Home!

*Alf.* Let me stay beside thee; I'll not speak,  
Nor look, nor move. Let me but sit and drop  
Tear for tear with thee.

*Jul.* . . . . . Go.

*Alf.* . . . . . My Cousin Julian——

*Jul.* Madden me not. I'm excommunicate,  
An exile, and an outlaw, but a man.

Grant me the human privilege to weep  
Alone o'er my dead father. King, I saved  
Thy life. Repay me now a thousand-fold,——  
Go.

*Alf.* Aye; for a sweet comforter.

*Enter Paolo.*

*Paolo.* . . . . . My liege,  
The lady Annabel——

*Jul.* . . . . . What? is she dead?  
Have I killed her?

*Alf.* . . . . . Speak, Paolo. In thy charge  
I left her.

*Jul.* Is she dead?

*Paolo.* No. Heaven forefend!  
But she hath left the Palace.

*Jul.* 'Tis the curse  
Of blood that's on my head; on all I love.  
She's lost.

*Alf.* Did she go forth alone?

*Paolo.* My liege,  
Prince Julian's aged Huntsman, Renzi, came,  
Sent, as he said, by thee, to bear her where  
Her Lord was sheltered.

*Jul.* Hoary traitor!

*Paolo.* She  
Followed him nothing fearing; and I too  
Had gone, but D'Alba's servants closed the gates,  
And then my heart misgave me.

*Jui.* Where's my sword?  
I'll rescue her! I'll save her!

*Alf.* Hast thou traced  
Thy lady?

*Paolo.* No, my liege. But much I fear—  
Certain a closed and guarded litter took  
The way to the western suburb.

*Jul.* There, where lies  
The palace of Count D'Alba! Stained—defiled—  
He hath thee now, my lovely one! There's still  
A way—Let me but reach thee! One asylum—  
One bridal bed—One resting place. All griefs  
Are lost in this. Oh would I lay as thou,  
My Father! Leave him not in the high-way



For dogs to mangle. He was once a Prince.  
Farewell!

*Alf.* Let me go with thee.

*Jul.* No. This deed  
Is mine.

[*Exit Julian.*

*Alf.* Paolo stay by the corse. I'll after,  
He shall not on this desperate quest alone.

*Paolo.* Rather, my liege, seek D'Alba :—As I  
deem

He still is at thy Palace. Watch him well.  
Stay by him closely. So may the sweet lady  
Be rescued, and Prince Julian saved.

*Alf.* Thou'rt right.  
[*Exeunt.*

### SCENE III.

*An Apartment in an old Tower ; a rich Gothic Window, closed, but so constructed as that the Light may be thrown in, near it a small arched Door, beyond which is seen an Inner Chamber, with an open Casement.—Annabel is borne in by D'Alba and Guards, through a strong Iron Door in the side Scene.*

*D'Alba, Annabel, Guards.*

*D'Alba.* Leave her with me. Guard well the  
gate ; and watch

That none approach the tower.

[*Exeunt Guards.*

Fair Annabel!

*Ann.* Who is it calls? Where am I? Who  
art thou?

Why am I here? Now heaven preserve me, D'Alba!  
Where's Julian? Where's Prince Julian? Where's  
my husband?

Renzi, who lured me from the palace, swore  
It was to meet my husband.

*D'Alba.*

Many an oath

First sworn in falsehood turns to truth. He's here.  
Calm thee, sweet lady.

*Ann.*

Where? I see him not.

Julian!

*D'Alba.* Another husband.

*Ann.*

Then he's dead!

He's dead!

*D'Alba.* He lives.

*Ann.*

Heard I aright? Again!

There is a deafening murmur in mine ears,  
Like the moaning sound that dwells in the sea  
shell,

So that I hear nought plainly. Say't again.

*D'Alba.*

He lives.

*Ann.* Now thanks to Heaven! Take me to him.  
Where am I?

*D'Alba.* In an old and lonely tower  
At the end of my poor orchard.

*Ann.*

Take me home.

*D'Alba.* Thou hast no home.

*Ann.* No home! His arms! his heart!  
Take me to him.

*D'Alba.* Sweet Annabel, be still.  
Conquer this woman's vain impatience,  
And listen. Why she trembles as I were  
Some bravo. Oh that man's free heart should bow  
To a fair cowardice! Listen. Thou know'st  
The sentence of the Melfi?

*Ann.* Aye, the unjust  
And wicked doom that ranked the innocent  
With the guilty. But I murmur not. I love  
To suffer with him.

*D'Alba.* He is banished; outlawed,  
Cut off from every human tie;—

*Ann.* Not all.  
I am his wife.

*D'Alba.* Under the Church's ban.  
I tell thee, Annabel, that learned Priest,  
The sage Anselmo, deems thou art released  
From thy unhappy vows; and will to night—

*Ann.* Stop. I was wedded in the light of day  
In the great church at Naples. Blessed day!  
I am his wife; bound to him evermore  
In sickness, penury, disgrace. Count D'Alba,  
Thou dost misprize the world, but thou must  
know  
That woman's heart is faithful, and clings closest  
In misery.

*D'Alba.* If the Church proclaim thee free—

*Ann.* Sir, I will not be free; and if I were

I'd give myself to Julian o'er again—  
Only to Julian! Trifle thus no longer.  
Lead me to him. Release me.

*D'Alba.* Now, by heaven,  
I'll bend this glorious constancy. I've known  
thee

Even from a little child, and I have seen  
That stubborn spirit broken: not by fear,  
That thou canst quell; nor interest; nor am-  
bition;

But love! love! love! I tell thee, Annabel,  
One whom thou lov'st, stands in my danger.

Wed me

This very night—I will procure a priest  
And dispensations, there shall nothing lack  
Of nuptial form—Wed me, or look to hear  
Of bloody justice.

*Ann.* My poor father, Melfi!

*D'Alba.* The Regent? He is dead.

*Ann.* God hath been merciful.

*D'Alba.* Is there no other name? no dearer?

*Ann.* Ha!

*D'Alba.* Hadst thou such tender love for this  
proud father,

Who little recked of thee, or thy fair looks;—  
Is all beside forgotten?

*Ann.* Speak!

*D'Alba.* Why, Julian!

Julian, I say!

*Ann.* He is beyond thy power.

Thanks, thanks, great God ! He's ruined, exiled,  
stripped

Of name, and land, and titles. He's as dead.  
Thou hast no power to harm him. He can fall  
No deeper. Earth hath not a lowlier state  
Than princely Julian fills.

*D'Alba.* Doth not the grave  
Lie deeper ?

*Ann.* What ? But thou hast not the power !  
Hast thou ? Thou canst not. Oh be pitiful !  
Speak, I conjure thee, speak !

*D'Alba.* Didst thou not hear  
That he was exiled, outlawed, banished far  
From the Sicilian Isles, on pain of death.  
If, after noon to-day, he e'er were seen  
In Sicily ? The allotted bark awaits ;  
The hour is past ; and he is here.

*Ann.* Now heaven  
Have mercy on us ! D'Alba, at thy feet,  
Upon my bended knees—Oh pity ! pity !  
Pity and pardon ! I'll not rise. I cannot.  
I cannot stand more than a creeping worm  
Whilst Julian's in thy danger. Pardon him !  
Thou wast not cruel once. I've seen thee turn  
Thy step from off the path to spare an insect ;  
I've marked thee shudder, when my falcon struck  
A panting bird ;—though thou hast tried to sneer  
At thy own sympathy. D'Alba, thy heart  
Is kinder than thou knowest. Save him, D'Alba !  
Save him !

*D'Alba.* Be mine.

*Ann.* Am I not his?

*D'Alba.* Be mine;

And he shall live to the whole age of man  
Unharm'd.

*Ann.* I'm his—Oh spare him!—Only his.

*D'Alba.* Then it is thou that dost enforce the  
law

On Julian; thou, his loving wife, that guid'st  
The officer to seize him where he lies  
Upon his father's corse; thou that dost lead  
Thy husband to the scaffold;—thou his wife,  
His loving wife! Thou yet may'st rescue him.

*Ann.* Now, God forgive thee, man! Thou torturest me

Worse than a thousand racks. But thou art not  
So devilish, *D'Alba*. Thou hast talked of love;—  
Would'st see me die here at thy feet? Have mercy!

*D'Alba.* Mercy! Aye, such as thou hast shewn  
to me

Through weeks and months and years. I was  
born strong

In scorn, the wise man's passion. I had lived  
Aloof from the juggling world, and with a string  
Watched the poor puppets ape their several parts;  
Fool, knave, or madman; till thy fatal charms,  
Beautiful mischief, made me knave and fool  
And madman; brought revenge and love and hate  
Into my soul. I love and hate thee, lady,  
And doubly hate myself for loving thee.  
But, by this teeming earth, this starry Heaven,

And by thyself the fairest stubbornest thing  
The fair stars shine upon, I swear to-night  
Thou shalt be mine. If willingly, I'll save  
Prince Julian;—but still mine. Speak. Shall  
he live?

Canst thou not speak? Wilt thou not save him?

*Ann.* No.

*D'Alba.* Did she die with the word! Dost hear  
me, lady?

I asked thee wouldst thou save thy husband?

*Ann.*

No.

Not so! Not so!

*D'Alba.* 'Tis well.

*(Exit D'Alba.)*

*Ann.*

Stay! Stay! He's gone.

Count D'Alba! Save him! Save him! D'Alba's  
gone,

And I have sentenced him.

*(After a pause.)*

He would have chosen so,

Would rather have died a thousand deaths than  
so

Have lived! Oh who will succour me, shut up  
In this lone tower! none but those horrid guards,  
And yonder hoary traitor, know where the poor,  
Poor Annabel is hidden; no man cares  
How she may perish—only one—and he—  
Preserve my wits! I'll count my beads; 'twill  
calm me:

What if I hang my rosary from the casement?

There is a brightness in the gorgeous jewel  
To catch men's eyes, and haply some may pass  
That are not pitiless. This window's closed ;  
But in yon chamber—Ah, 'tis open ! There  
I'll hang the holy gem, a guiding star,  
A visible prayer to man and God. Oh save me  
From sin and shame ! Save him ! I'll hang it  
there.

[*Exit.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.



## ACT V.



## SCENE.

*The same as the last ; the arched Door nearly closed.*

*Annabel.*

*Ann.* I cannot rest. I wander to and fro  
Within my dreary prison, as to seek  
For comfort and find none. Each hour hath  
killed

A hope that seemed the last. The shadows point  
Upward. The sun is sinking. Guard me, heaven,  
Through this dread night!

*(A gun is heard without.*

What evil sound—All sounds  
Are evil here! Is there some murder doing?  
Or wantonly in sport.

*Enter Julian through the arched Door.*

*Jul.* Annabel!

*Ann.* Julian!

*Jul* My wife! Art thou still mine?

*Ann.* Thine own.

*Jul.* She smiles!

She clings to me! her eyes are fixed on mine  
With the old love, the old divinest look  
Of innocence! It is yet time. She's pure!  
She's undefiled!—Speak to me, Annabel.  
Tremble not so.

*Ann.* 'Tis joy. Oh I have been  
So wretched! And to see thee when I thought  
We ne'er should meet again! How didst thou  
find me?

*Jul.* The rosary! the blessed rosary  
Shone in the sun-beam, like a beacon fire,  
A guiding star! Thrice holy was its light  
That led me here to save——

*Ann.* Oh blessings on thee!  
How? where? what way? The iron door is  
barred!

Where didst thou enter Julian!

*Jul.* Through the casement  
Of yonder chamber.

*Ann.* What? that grim ascent!  
That awful depth! Didst thou dare this for me?  
And must I?—But I fear not. I'll go with thee.  
I'm safe of foot, and light. I'll go.

*Jul.* Thou canst not.

*Ann.* Then go thyself, or he will find thee here,  
He and his ruffian band. Let us part now.  
Kiss me again. Fly, fly from Sicily!—  
That fearful man—but he is all one lie—  
Told me thy life was forfeited.

*Jul.* He told thee  
A truth.

*Ann.* Oh fly! fly! fly;

*Jul.* My Annabel  
The bloodhounds that he laid upon the scent  
Have tracked me hither. Didst thou hear a gun?  
For once the ball passed harmless.

*Ann.* Art thou hurt?  
Art sure thou art not?

*Jul.* Yes. But they who aimed  
That death are on the watch. Their quarry's  
lodged.

We can escape them—one way—only one!

*Ann.* How? What way?

*Jul.* Ask not.

*Ann.* Whither?

*Jul.* To — my father.

*Ann.* Then he's alive—Oh happiness! They  
told me

That he was dead. Why do we loiter here?  
Let's join him now.

*Jul.* Not yet.

*Ann.* Now! now! Thou know'st not  
How horribly these walls do picture to me  
The several agonies whereof my soul  
Hath drunk to day. I have been tempted, Julian,  
By one—a fiend! tempted till I almost thought  
God had forsaken me. But thou art here  
To save me, and my pulse beats high again  
With love and hope. I am light-hearted now,  
And could laugh like a child—only these walls

Do crowd around me with a visible weight,  
A palpable pressure ; giving back the forms  
Of wildest thoughts that wandered through my  
brain

Bright chattering Madness, and sedate Despair,  
And fear the Great Unreal!—Take me hence!  
Take me away with thee!

*Jul.* Not yet, not yet.

Thou sweetest wretch! I cannot—Dotard! Fool!  
I must. Not yet! not yet!—Talk to me, Annabel;  
This is the hour when thou wast wont to make  
Earth Heaven with lovely words; the sun-set  
hour,

That woke thy spirit into joy. Once more  
Talk to me, Annabel.

*Ann.* Aye, all day long,  
When we are free. Thy voice is choked; thy  
looks

Are not on me; thy hand doth catch and twitch  
And grasp mine painfully,—that gentle hand!

*Jul.* O God! O God! that right hand!—kiss  
it not!

Take thy lips from it!

*Ann.* Canst thou save me, Julian?  
Thou always dost speak truth. Canst save thy-  
self?

Shall we go hence together?

*Jul.* Aye, one fate—  
One home.

*Ann.* Why that is bliss. We shall be poor—  
Shall we not, Julian? I shall have a joy

I never looked for ; I shall work for thee,  
Shall tend thee, be thy Page, thy 'Squire, thy  
all,—

Shall I not, Julian.

*Jul.* Annabel, look forth  
Upon this glorious world ! Look once again  
On our fair Sicily, lit by that sun  
Whose level beams do cast a golden shine  
On sea, and shore, and city, on the pride  
Of bowery groves ; on Etna's smouldering top ;—  
Oh bright and glorious world ! and thou of all  
Created things most glorious, tricked in light,  
As the stars that live in Heaven !

*Ann.* Why dost thou gaze  
So sadly on me.

*Jul.* The bright stars, how oft  
They fall, or seem to fall ! The Sun—look ! look !  
He sinks, he sets in glory. Blessed orb,  
Like thee—like thee—Dost thou remember once  
We sate by the sea shore when all the Heaven  
And all the ocean seemed one glow of fire  
Red, purple, saffron, melted into one  
Intense and ardent flame, the doubtful line  
Where sea and sky should meet was lost in that  
Continuous brightness ; there we sate and talked  
Of the mysterious union that blessed orb  
Wrought between earth and heaven, of life and  
death—

High mysteries !—and thou didst wish thyself  
A spirit sailing in that flood of light  
Straight to the Eternal Gates, didst pray to pass

Away in such a glory. Annabel!  
Look out upon the burning sky, the sea  
One lucid ruby—'tis the very hour!  
Thou'lt be a Seraph at the Fount of Light  
Before——

*Ann.* What must I die? And wilt thou kill me?  
Canst thou? Thou can'st to save——

*Jul.* To save thy honour!  
I shall die with thee.

*Ann.* Oh no! no! live! live!  
If I must die—Oh it is sweet to live,  
To breathe, to move, to feel the throbbing blood  
Beat in the veins,—to look on such an earth  
And such a Heaven,—to look on thee! Young life  
Is very dear.

*Jul.* Would'st live for D'Alba?

*Ann.* No!  
I had forgot. I'll die. Quick! Quick!

*Jul.* One kiss!  
Angel, dost thou forgive me?

*Ann.* Yes.

*Jul.* My sword!—  
I cannot draw it.

*Ann.* Now! I'm ready.

*Enter Bertone, and two Murderers.*

*Bert.* Seize him!  
Yield thee, Prince Julian! Yield thee! Seize  
the lady.

*Jul.* Oh fatal, fond delay! Dare not come near  
us!

Stand off! I'll guard thee, sweet. But when I fall  
Let him not triumph.

*Bert.* Yield thee!

Strike him down.

*Jul.* Thou canst die then, my fairest.

*[The two murderers have now advanced close to Julian.]*

*Bert.*

Now!

*[One of the murderers strikes at Julian with his sword; Annabel rushes before him, receives the wound aimed at him, and falls at his feet.]*

*Ann. (before she is wounded).* For thee!

*Then after.*

For thee.

'Tis sweet!

*(dies.)*

*Jul.* Fiend, hast thou slain her? Die! die! die!  
Come on.

*(fights and kills him.)*

*Bert.* Call instant help! Hasten the Count!

*[Exit the other murderer.]*

*(Julian and Bertone fight, and Julian kills him.)*

*Jul.* My wife!

My murdered wife! Doth she not breathe? I  
thought—

My sight is dim—Oh no! she's pale! she's cold!  
She's still! If she were living she would speak  
To comfort me. She's mute! she's stiff! she's  
—dead!

Why do I shiver at the word, that am  
Death's factor, peopler of unhallowed graves,  
Slayer of all my race! not thee! not thee!  
God, in his mercy, guided the keen sword  
To thy white bosom,—I could not. Lie there.  
I'll shroud thee in my mantle.

*(covering her with it.)*

The rude earth  
Will veil thy beauty next. One kiss!—She died  
To save me.—One kiss, Annabel! I slew  
The slave that killed thee,—but the fiend, the  
cause—

Is he not coming?—I will chain in life  
Till I've avenged thee; I could slay an army  
Now in my strong despair. But that were  
mercy.

He must wear daggers in his heart. He loved  
her;—

I'll feed his hopes—and then—Aye—ha! ha! ha!  
That will be a revenge to make the fiends  
Laugh—ha! ha! ha! I'll wrap me in this cloak  
*(taking one belonging to the dead bravo.)*

And in the twilight—So!—He will not know  
My voice—it frightens me!—I have not hidden  
Thee quite, my Annabel! There is one tress  
Floating in springy grace—as if—she's dead!  
She's dead! I must not gaze, for then my heart  
Will break before its time. He comes. The  
stairs

Groan at his pressure.



*Enter D'Alba.*

*D'Alba (entering to an Attendant)*

Back, and watch the gate!—  
All's tranquil. Where's the traitor?

*Jul.* Dead.

*D'Alba.* Who slew him?

*Jul.*

I.

*D'Alba.* And the lady,—where is she?

*Jul.*

At rest.

*D'Alba.* Fair Gentleness! After this perilous  
storm

She needs must lack repose. I'll wait her here.  
Friend! thou hast done good service to the state  
And me; we're not ungrateful. Julian's sword  
Fails him not often; and the slave who fled  
Proclaimed him Victor.

*Jul.*

He slew two.

*D'Alba.*

And thou

Slew'st him? Aye there he lies in the ermined  
cloak

Of royalty, his haughty shroud! Six ells  
Of rude uncostly linen serves to wrap  
Your common corse; but this man was born  
swathed

In regal purple; lived so; and so died.  
So be he buried. Let not mine enemy  
Call me ungenerous. Roll him in his ermine  
And dig a hole without the city gate  
For him and the proud Regent. Quick! I'd have

The funeral speedy. Ah! the slaughtering sword  
Lies by him, brown with clotted gore. Hence!  
hence!

And drag the carrion with thee.

*Jul.*

Wilt thou not

Look on the corse?

*D'Alba.*

I cannot wait her waking.

I must go feast my eyes on her fair looks—

Divinest Annabel! My widowed bride!—

Where is she?

*Jul. (uncovering the body.)* There. Now gaze  
thyself to Hell!

Gloat with hot love upon that beauteous dust!—

She's safe! She's dead!

*D'Alba.*

Julian!

*Jul.*

But touch her not

She's mine.

*D'Alba.* Oh perfectest and loveliest thing!

Eternal curses rest upon his head

Who murdered thee!

*Jul.*

Off! off! Pollute her not!

She's white! She's pure!—Curses! Now curse  
for curse

On the foul murderer! On him who turned

The sweet soul from her home, who slew her fa-  
ther,

Hunted her husband as a beast of prey,

Pursued, imprisoned, lusted, left no gate

Open save that to Heaven!—Off! gaze not on  
her!

Thy look is profanation.

*Enter Alfonso, Leanti, Valore, &c.*

*Alf. (Entering.)* Here, Leanti!

This way! Oh sight of horror! Julian! Julian!

*Valore.* The Princess dead! Why D'Alba—

*Leanti.* Seize him guards.

Lead him before the States. This bloody scene  
Calls for deep vengeance.

*D'Alba.* If I were not weary

Of a world that sweats under a load of fools—

Old creaking vanes that turn as the wind changes—

Lords, I'd defy ye! I'd live on for ever!

And I defy ye now. For she is gone—

The glorious vision!—and the Patriarch's years

Were valueless. Do with me as ye will.—

Ye cannot call back her.

*Leanti.* Off with him!

*(Exit D'Alba guarded.)*

*Alf.* Julian!

Wilt thou not speak?

*Jul.* I have been thanking heaven

That she is dead.

*Valore.* His wits are gone.

*Alf.* My Julian

Look on me. Dost thou know me? I'm thy

Cousin,

Thy comforter.

*Jul.* She was my Comforter!

And now—But I do know thee; thou'rt the King;

The pretty boy I loved—She loved thee too!

I'm glad thou'rt come to close my eyes. Draw  
nearer

That I may see thy face. Where art thou?

*Alf.*

Here!

*Jul.* Poor child he weeps! Send for the  
honoured dead

Beside the city gate,—he pardoned me!

Bury us in one grave,—all in one grave!

I did not kill her. Strew her with white flowers,  
For she was innocent.

*Leanti.* Cheer thee! Take hope!

*Valore.*

Raise up his head.

*Alf.* My Julian!

*Jul.* He forgave me,—

Thou know'st he did!—White flowers! Nothing  
but white!

(*Dies.*

*Leanti.* He's gone!

*Alf.*

And I am left in the wide world  
Alone. My Julian!

THE END.

## EPILOGUE,

WRITTEN BY T. A. TALFOURD, ESQ.

---

SPOKEN BY MRS. CHATTERLEY.

---

Is not her lot intolerably hard  
Who does this pious office for the Bard ?  
Who comes applauses not her own to win,  
Or pay the penance for another's sin ?  
To tack, lest gentle moralizers rail,  
A drawling comment to a doubtful tale ;  
To break with hollow mirth the sacred spell  
Which the poor poet rarely weaves too well ;  
Or if his sorrows haplessly are laugh'd at,  
Look grave for wit to throw his closing shaft at,  
Methinks our Author's sex you shrewdly guess—  
“ It is a Lady's Drama”—frankly “ yes.”  
Yet let no censure on her daring fall,  
When all “ Life's idle business” is—to scrawl ;  
Our tender bosoms learn in songs to melt,  
And send their griefs to press—as soon as felt ;  
No thought in lone obscurity decays,  
But dies away in neatly publish'd lays ;  
No tender hope can bloom and fade unseen,  
It leaves its fragrance—in a magazine ;  
The bashful heart whom deep emotions bless,  
Hides it's soft secrets in the daily press ;

With hints of well-assum'd despair beguiles,  
And execrates mankind to win their smiles ;  
A woman sure may claim no small compassion,  
Who has this plea—she's only in the fashion.  
O, if the fair's prerogative it be  
To watch supreme o'er calumny and tea ;  
To slay an Author's hopes with daintiest sneers,  
And change the fates of poets as of peers ;  
Regard not *her* unwomanly who seeks  
To draw down sacred tears o'er beauty's cheeks,  
Who for her sex, by artless scenes, would keep  
It's dearest right—to weep with those that weep ;  
Who if to-night her humble muse hath brought  
To some sad heart a train of gentle thought ;  
On some worn spirit shed that blest relief,  
A generous sympathy with kindred grief,  
With joy returns to life's secluded ways,  
And asks no recompense of noisier praise.

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